

Collins Refuse AML Enhancement Rule Project

Letcher County

Project Description

The proposed project (2.9 acres total) consists of removing a coal refuse pile, located at the community of Southdown, in Letcher County. The project area is centrally located at 37° 09' 35.30" latitude and 82° 48' 04.84" longitude on the Mayking quadrangle (see the attached map.) The coal refuse is a potential fire hazard, an environmental threat, and possible source of stream pollution in Crafts Colly Creek.

The existing refuse pile was created during mining prior to 1976. The pile is currently vegetated in volunteer species, including trees. Trees representing Indiana bat habitat will only be removed from the project area between October 15 and March 31. Drainage controls will be installed and cover material will be removed and stockpiled prior to refuse removal.

Construction includes excavating approximately 60,000 cubic yards of total material, and transporting it to an off site permitted preparation plant. Analysis of the material shows it to be approximately 35%, by weight, of recoverable coal giving an estimated coal volume of 21,000 cubic yards.

Because the pile is small, it does not appear feasible to work the pile from the top down. Rather it is anticipated that equipment will be used to push the material from the top to the bottom in five (5) to ten (10) foot intervals. If deemed necessary during removal operations, a series of sumps/sediment traps will be constructed to control runoff. Other devices that may be used to control runoff may include silt fences, and hay/straw bales. Once refuse removal is complete, cover material, generated from within the project boundaries, will provide a final cover for planting vegetation. The final configuration of the project area will resemble the pre-existing natural drainage pattern of the area.

All project access exists. Road dust and any coal refuse pile dust will be controlled by watering. Noise will be controlled by limiting work hours and keeping engine brake use to an absolute minimum. Any concrete debris found will be pulverized and buried on site. Metal debris and trash will be taken to an approved landfill off-site. Construction disturbances will be kept to a minimum through the use of a stringently formulated sediment and erosion control program consisting of straw bales, silt fences, and the necessary sumps. All cover material will be generated from on-site and prompt re-vegetation using agricultural limestone, fertilizer, seed, and mulch will be performed on all areas disturbed by the project. A diversion ditch will be constructed below the refuse pile routing all runoff to the sump.

No off-site borrow areas will be used. All of the project area has been previously disturbed by coal mining, residential construction, or road construction. This project will require the removal of some existing second-growth trees and shrubs; however, erosion and sedimentation after the project will be reduced, compared to existing conditions. No disturbance of any stream reach is planned. No construction is proposed within a regulated floodplain. All necessary permits and/or variances will be procured prior to construction.